

. . . BROWNHILLS . . .

Urban District Council

FOURTH

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

AND OF THE

SANITARY INSPECTOR.

1914.

BROWNHILLS :

A. F. LAWTON, PRINTER,
LICHFIELD ROAD.

BROWNHILLS URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

1914.

*To the Chairman and Members of the
Brownhills Urban District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in submitting to you my Fourth Annual Report on the Health and the Sanitary circumstances of your District for the year 1914.

The Report is prepared on the lines laid down by the Local Government Board, the only departure from last year being the inclusion of the Sanitary Inspector's Report for the year.

The Surveyor has very kindly undertaken that part of the Report dealing with the Sewage Disposal, as this touches more directly on his department than on mine.

The area of the District is 6,307 acres and the population estimated to the middle of the year is 17,408. The population at the Census of 1911 was 16,856, giving an increase of 552 since that time.

The chief occupation of the inhabitants is coal mining. Work has been very brisk during the year. There is no poverty in the true sense of the word in the district, with the exception of a few cases which are unavoidable and common to every district.

I should like to draw the attention of the Health Committee to the Sanitary Inspector's Report. In certain passages he draws your attention to the wide area of the district, and the time it takes in getting from one end of the area to the other. He does his journeys on an ordinary bicycle, and I would like to suggest to the Council that much valuable time would be saved by providing him with a motor cycle. Lately his work has been very greatly increased, especially the work coming under the Housing Town Planning Act. No one except an official in close connection with the Sanitary Inspector's Office can have any adequate idea of his manifold duties, and those duties instead of decreasing will become more onerous from year to year.

Water Supply.

There were twenty-two samples of water taken from wells during the year, all of which were condemned as unfit for drinking purposes. Twenty of these wells have now been closed, and the mains of the South Staffordshire Waterworks Company laid on, with the result that forty-nine houses which previously depended on well water now have the advantages of the South Staffordshire Company supply.

This still leaves sixty-two wells in the district. I am afraid the Council do not sufficiently realise how strongly medical opinion condemns drinking water taken from an ordinary private well source. No matter how carefully the well has been constructed, no matter how carefully the site of the well has been chosen, there still remains the great danger of contamination of the water from various sources. The fact that in the twenty-two samples taken, all were found unfit for drinking purposes, ought to be sufficient to urge the Council on to abolish these wells where an adequate supply can be laid on by the South Staffordshire Company.

Sewage Disposal, &c.

Report by MR. J. H. SHAW, Surveyor.

Pollution of Rivers.

The overflow from the Mosspits Pumping Station into the brookcourse has been cut off, and no pollution is now taking place from this source.

Sewage Disposal.

The Sewage from Walsall Wood, Shelfield, High Heath, Shire Oak, Brownhills and Clayhanger is dealt with by bacterial beds and land filtration at the Sewage Farm at Walsall Wood. During the year, 3 acres of land have been re-drained to a greater depth, making a total number of 61 acres recently re-drained available for treatment of sewage by irrigation. The effluents from the land and beds are satisfactory.

SHELFIELD & HIGH HEATH.—The new pumping plant (referred to in the Report of Medical Officer Health's for last year) at the Mosspits has been completed and consists of a suction gas plant, Gas Engine (38 B.H.P.) and a three-throw vertical rain pump, capable of delivering 22,500 gallons per hour. This additional plant acts as a reserve to the duplicate pumping plant previously laid down (which is capable of delivering 18,500 gallons per hour) making the total capacity of the pumps equivalent to 41,000 gallons per hour or 984,000 gallons per day of 24 hours.

The pumping machinery is now ample for dealing with the whole of the sewage and storm water which flows to the Mosspits. I am pleased to say that during the abnormal rainfall of the past year, no difficulty has been experienced. Storm water and the night-flow only is treated at the Mosspits works.

NORTON WARD.—The Local Government Board held an inquiry with reference to an application made by the Lichfield Rural District Council for a joint scheme for dealing with the Sewage of Watling Street East.

The scheme has been approved, a loan sanctioned, and Tenders have been invited for carrying out the work.

The Sewage of Norton West is still being dealt with by land treatment under arrangement with a neighbouring farmer.

PELSALL ROAD & CHESTER ROAD.—I have been unable up to the present to prepare a scheme for this district, but the work is in hand, and I hope to report thereon later.

Disinfecting Apparatus.

A Disinfecting House has been erected at the Public Buildings, and a Washington Lyon's Improved Patent Steam Disinfector installed, which is now in working order. This is centrally situated, and is easily available for the whole of the District.

Excrement and Refuse Disposal.

There is an increase in the number of water closets in the district over last year of ninety-two.

The total number is now five hundred and sixteen. If this steady increase assumes larger proportions year by year and the Council energetically support the Sanitary Inspector in his endeavour to abolish the germ breeding and foul smelling privy, in a few years the Medical Officer may have the satisfaction of reporting that the privy is a thing of the past.

Of the 516 Water Closets,

305 are Fresh Water Closets,

65 are Waste Water Closets,

and 146 are Hand Flush Closets.

Last year there were 139 Hand Flush Closets, so that we have an increase of seven since last year. I must protest against the introduction of this type of closet in the district. To my mind it is an objectionable type, and ought not to be allowed.

The conversion of one type of sanitary convenience to another is as follows:—

Privies fixed, converted to movable receptacles	39
" with fixed receptacles, to Fresh W.C's...	45
" with fixed receptacles, to Waste W.C's	5
" with movable receptacles, to Fresh W.C's	12
" with movable receptacles, to Waste W.C's	nil

Thirty out of the thirty-two new houses erected during the year have been provided with water closets. There was no sewer available in the two exceptions. Thirty-nine pan closets have been substituted in place of the ordinary privy.

Twelve pan closets have been converted into Fresh Water Closets. There are now one hundred and ninety-eight pan closets in the district, an increase of twenty-seven over last year.

The number of Cesspits remains the same:—

42 in Norton Ward.
8 in Central Ward.
2 in Walsall Wood Ward.

A foreman superintends the removal of the night soil, and he acts under instructions from the Sanitary Inspector,

The insanitary method of disposal of the night soil material on the roads before removal into carts remains as before.

Last year I suggested in my Annual Report that the Health Committee might visit some of the other districts where the Bin system is at work, so that they might judge of the advantages of this system over our own.

I am sorry they have been unable to do so, but I hopefully make the suggestion again, in the confident belief that if they do so, they will return strong advocates of the Bin system.

Schools.

The sanitary condition in most of the Public Elementary Schools is very satisfactory.

The Norton Canes Schools have to contend with the ordinary privy system as there is no sewage scheme proper for that part of the Ward. I had occasion to visit those privies at the end of the year, and found them in far from a satisfactory condition. The Sanitary Inspector has now given orders to have them emptied at more frequent intervals. This ought to mitigate somewhat the unavoidable defects of the system. I am again very much indebted to the principals of the various schools for the ready manner in which they co-operate by promptly notifying to me the supposed cause of any great fall in the school attendance, and also any case of notifiable infectious disease.

The following is a list of closures made during the year:—

Watling Street Schools—5th January to 12th January,
Diphtheria and Scarlet Fever.
Central Schools—5th January to 12th January, Diphtheria
and Scarlet Fever.

Ogley Hay Schools—5th January to 12th January,
Diphtheria and Scarlet Fever.
Ogley Hay Schools— to 23rd February,

Clayhanger Schools—8th January to 19th January,
Chicken Pox.

Walsall Wood Council Schools—17th February to 24th
February, Diphtheria.

Walsall Wood Church Schools Infants—5th November
to 21st November, Diphtheria.

Shelfield Schools Mixed and Infants—17th December to
Xmas Hodidays, Diphtheria.

MEDICAL INSPECTION OF SCHOOL CHILDREN.—
The arrangement for Medical Inspection of School Children is
in the hands of the County Medical Officer who is also School
Medical Officer.

Milk Supply.

There are 20 Dairies and Cowsheds in the district:—

5 in the Central Ward
10 in the Walsall Wood Ward.
5 in the Norton Ward.

The inspections made during the year by the Sanitary
Inspector and myself strengthened the opinion I expressed in
last year's report that extensive alterations will require to be
made in a good many before they come up to the standard.

One of the cowsheds was found in such a bad condition,
that one came to the conclusion, that the only satisfactory
method of dealing with it would be to condemn it.

In another, light was entirely excluded, and examination
of the premises could only be conducted by means of artificial
light.

In a good many of the others ventilation was inadequate.
A few were in very good condition.

Slaughter Houses.

No meat has been condemned during the year. The
Slaughter houses are for the most part in very good sanitary
condition, and frequent inspections are made.

Bakehouses.

These are from a sanitary point of view satisfactory. There are no underground bakehouses in the district.

Housing Accommodation.

There are 3,431 houses in the district, and this taking the population estimated to the middle of the year, gives five persons to each house.

There were 32 new houses erected during the year. The erection of these is entirely under the supervision of the Surveyor, and plans of new buildings are brought before you for approval prior to erection.

At the present time there is not a sufficient supply of houses to meet the demand. I have ample opportunities for obtaining information on this point, and I know that in many cases, people have had to leave the district on this account. We have also had considerable difficulty in getting the inhabitants of condemned houses to leave those houses, owing to the impossibility of finding a temporary shelter. In this matter I should urge that immediate steps be taken by the Council to find a remedy, if it were not for the fact that the demand for labour may fall away considerably during the next few years owing to certain circumstances in the district.

I would again draw your attention to the scarcity of houses with three-roomed sleeping apartments. A good many cases of overcrowding arise entirely from this fact. Overcrowding is one of the worst evils that the Sanitary Officials have to contend with in a labouring district. It has a bad effect on the moral and physical welfare of the people.

In order to avoid unnecessary repetition, I have taken the Sanitary Inspector's Report on the working of the Housing Town Planning Act, and placed it under this heading:—

REPORT ON THE WORKING OF THE Housing Town Planning Act, 1909,

By D. A. BRADBURY, Sanitary Inspector.

The Housing Town Planning Act refers to Houses, the rental of which does not exceed the sum of £40 in London, £26 in the provinces, provided the population exceeded 50,000 at the

last census, and £16 in the case of a house situated elsewhere. The owner of the property must see that it is in a reasonably fit condition for human habitation, and must see that it is kept so. It is now imperative under the Act, that the Local Authority shall cause to be made an inspection of their District, and a record shall be kept of such inspection in a form laid down by the Local Government Board.

The owner of the property has the same right of entry to the dwelling as the Local Authority upon giving 24 hours' notice.

The Act gives your Sanitary Authority very drastic powers to deal with such properties—drastic in comparison with the cumbrous procedure prevailing under the Housing Acts, and the Public Health Acts. It is now unnecessary to appear before the Courts of Justice to enforce the abatement of serious nuisances, or the closure of insanitary properties.

Your Authority can step in, do the work required, and recover the cost in the usual manner. Every person affected by the Act has a right to appeal to the Local Government Board.

One of the weak points in the Act is, that there does not seem to be any redress, whereby the landlord may claim damages for the wilful neglect of the tenant, nor does the Act help him in ridding his property of undesirable dirty and lazy tenants who seems to have lost all self respect, and who are not only a nuisance to themselves but also to their neighbours. This class of person will damage property, and make slumdom whatever their surroundings.

Generally speaking, the housing accommodation in your District is fairly good, but there is still room for improvement in connection with the poorer class of property.

During the year house to house inspection has not been carried out, as rapidly as one would wish, but it is owing to other numerous and important duties which take up your Inspector's time, especially as the district is so large and scattered.

The following is a statement of the work done during the year under the Act:—

Number of houses inspected	-	182
Number of houses found defective		144
Number of Notices served	-	104
Number of Notices complied with		64
Number of Notices not complied with		40
Number of houses closed unfit	-	8

The above figures shew a large proportion of houses found defective to the number inspected, but it is only fair to say that inspections were confined to those properties requiring immediate attention, and was not a systematic inspection.

With respect to the notices not complied with, the work is in hand, and the repairs, &c. necessary in order to comply with the notices will shortly be carried out.

Seven of the eight houses for which closing orders were issued, have been put in a good sanitary condition, and the other is being proceeded with.

The following defects are amongst the most numerous found on inspection :—Defective roofs, tiles broken and missing, lack of pointing to roof and walls, defective chimney stacks, (causing tenant to fasten fireplaces up owing to draughts), window frames loose and in need of pointing, spouting defective or missing, floors broken, damp walls, defective plaster, defective brick sinks, together with the usual sanitary defects.

As to the manner of dealing with these, notices are served on the owners of defective properties, on receipt of which in most cases, the Landlord is ready to meet the Inspector at the property, when the schedule of defects and suggested remedies is gone through. Landlords as a whole are willing to carry out the work required. Whilst the work is in progress, visits are regularly paid and suggestions offered as to the best means of doing the work with as little expense as possible, consistent with efficiency. There is of course no legal obligation to adopt this method of procedure, but by doing so, much trouble is saved. It avoids the necessity for condemning the work done by the landlords on completion. It tends to prevent cheap pitching work done by incompetent workmen, of which I am no advocate, when the work is well done in the first instance, it will prevent complaints from property owners, that they are continually being harrassed by the Sanitary Authority, and that no sooner has one repair been executed, than another is asked for.

Therefore, thorough repair is ultimately cheaper for the owner, and more satisfactory to the Sanitary Authority, besides very materially raising the market value of the property, and helping to raise the standard of the class of tenant.

In carrying out the house inspections, I am pleased to say, the tenants generally were very courteous and obliging, and gave me every facility in the discharge of my duty. In no case, was I refused admittance upon first call.

Bye-laws and Adoptive Acts.

The Bye-laws of the District have been re-modelled in accordance with the Bye-laws of the Local Government Board, and we are awaiting the sanction of the Board to certain of the Sections.

Certain Clauses in Parts 2, 3 and 4 of the Public Health Amendment Act, 1907, are in force in the District. In another part of the Report, I have drawn attention to the Notification of Births Act, which Act I would strongly recommend the Council to adopt.

Factories and Workshops.

The only works of any importance are—

A Chemical Works.

An Iron Foundry.

A Brick Yard.

No special comment is required concerning these.

In addition to these works, the following is a list of the Workshops :—

Bootmakers	-	-	-	-	5
Blacksmiths and Wheelwrights	-	-	-	-	7
Boatmaker	-	-	-	-	1
Builder	-	-	-	-	1
Bakehouses	-	-	-	-	11
Dressmakers and Milliners	-	-	-	-	11
Sand and Gravel Pits	-	-	-	-	2
Tailors	-	-	-	-	2

The Sanitary Inspector assures me these are in good sanitary condition.

Isolation Hospital.

Quite recently, a meeting was arranged between Cannock Urban District Council and this Council for the consideration of a joint scheme for the provision of an Infectious Diseases Hospital. It would be premature to make any definite statement about the matter, but I think it can be safely be said that any difficulties that stand in the way are difficulties easily surmountable. The first cost of a permanent structure is likely to be considerable, but the advantages that will accrue to the district will far outweigh the disadvantages of increased rates. Outbreaks

of Infectious diseases can be dealt with efficiently at the commencement of the outbreak, isolation of the infectious cases will be easily and completely carried out, disinfection of the infected premises can be done immediately the patient is removed to Hospital. At the present time, it is quite impossible to know that an infectious case is continually isolated from the other children of a family. I hope that now the Council have taken the matter up they will energetically push it through to completion. I have on several occasions drawn the Council's attention to the Smallpox Hospital, and it is satisfactory to report that they now see the advisability of putting it into a proper condition. The dwelling house which would serve as an administrative block and be used for nurses apartments, is to be put into a habitable state. They have agreed to carry private mains from the mains of the South Staffordshire Waterworks Company. The water closet system will be introduced, and a dumb-well put down in the ground to deal with sewage material. They have agreed to plant trees around the Hospital, which will materially add to the comfort of the place, and from an æsthetic point of view, will be a great improvement.

Infectious Disease.

A comparison of notifications received in 1913, and those received this year is given below :—

		1913	1914
Diphtheria	-	42	67
Erysipelas	-	12	11
Scarlet Fever	-	21	69
Enteric Fever	-	1	—
Puerpural Fever	-	1	2
Pulmonary Tuberculosis		16	20

Diphtheria.

There were sixty-seven cases of this disease during the year. Fortunately most of the cases were of a mild type, but four of the cases terminated fatally, all of those succumbing to Heart failure. In the first quarter of the year, there were thirty-eight cases notified, in the second quarter fourteen, in the third quarter seven, and eight in the last quarter.

Seventeen of the cases in the first quarter occurred amongst children attending the Brownhills Schools. Fourteen amongst children attending the Walsall Wood Schools. Six in the Watling Street Schools, and one at Norton Canes.

Four of the cases were in adults. In one of those the sister attending school was found to have enlarged cervical glands and to be anaemic, but swabbing gave a negative result. Another of the cases was a teacher, teaching in a school, from which four cases had already been reported.

There was no indication that the milk supply was a factor in the spread of the disease, as the source varied in most of the cases; on the contrary, all the evidence pointed to the transmission of the virus by unrecognized diphtheria carriers. Nasal diphtheria to my mind is a very elusive type of the disease, and probably many of the carriers had a mild nasal infection.

I have visited the schools on many occasions and taken swabs from suspicious throats, and from the throats of children who have been in contact with the notified cases, so far, I have not had a positive return from any of those swabs. My colleagues always wait until they get a negative result from swabbing before intimating by card, that the house is ready for disinfection. The Sanitary Inspector disinfects with Formaldehyde Vapour and Spraying. The other children of the house are kept at home from school, until disinfection is carried out, and frequently the throats of the entire family are swabbed before the house is ready for disinfection.

Scarlet Fever.

There were sixty-nine cases of this disease notified.

A severe outbreak occurred in Brownhills, the central part of the district, at the end of the year 1913, and continued into January of this year. There were twenty-three cases notified in January. I heard from several sources afterwards, that certain families had suffered from a mild illness, followed by peeling of the hands and feet, and that the parents though aware that the children were probably suffering from Scarlet Fever, had purposely avoided calling in a Medical man, in order that the trouble entailed in isolation might be avoided. I made exhaustive enquiries into the matter, but as considerable time had elapsed between receiving information and the actual illness, and as my informants were loath to give names and positive proof would have been difficult to obtain, I contented myself with explaining to the parents of the cases which followed, that their children were suffering from the folly and negligence of those others, and that the policy adopted by them was thoroughly selfish and culpable.

There was one death from Scarlet Fever, and a very large proportion of the cases suffered from Kidney trouble.

Tuberculosis.

Twenty-six cases of Tuberculosis were notified. Twenty of those being Pulmonary, and six other Tubercular forms. Four of the Pulmonary cases are at present receiving treatment in a Sanatorium. Two have had treatment there, and are now following out the rules taught them. One Glandular case is in a Convalescent home. There were eleven deaths from Pulmonary Tuberculosis, but only four of these were amongst the notified cases of this year. There were four deaths from other Tuberculous diseases. Four of the cases were notified by the School Medical Officer. This in future ought to prove a very useful part of the School Medical Officer's duty, as some of the cases in children are not sufficiently pronounced to attract the parent's attention. It is another step towards the early detection of an insidious disease. In one of the four cases, the Medical Officer's notification of Tubercular Peritonitis was the means of directing my attention to another member of the family who was found to be suffering from Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

In the Central Ward, the district nurse has undertaken the visiting of Pulmonary cases. Nurse Edgar left before the completion of the year, otherwise she intended giving me a report on her work which would have been included in this report. She had seven cases on her list, and I found her services of great assistance.

Those cases were visited at least twice a week by the nurse. She instructed the patients themselves, or a responsible member of the family in the taking and registering of the temperature, gave instructions in the preparation of special foods recommended, and saw that the instructions of the Medical attendant were carried out.

I understand it is the intention of the Tuberculosis Officer to establish a Dispensary in the Central Ward at an early date. At present there is a considerable difficulty in finding suitable premises, owing to the complete absence of unoccupied houses.

Of the Tuberculosis cases, other than Pulmonary—Two were of Tubercular Peritonitis, two of Glandular Tuberculosis, and two Tuberculosis of Bone. The notifying and visiting of

those cases is useful, in that it may be the means of bringing to light Tubercular disease in other members of the family.

Erysipelas.

There were eleven cases notified.

Enteric Fever.

No case of this disease was notified.

Puerperal Fever.

Two cases occurred during the year, both of which were fatal.

One of the cases was attended at the confinement by a midwife.

The County Medical Officer was at once notified, and the nurses in both cases ceased attending, and clothing and appliances were disinfected.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum.

Although this disease is now a compulsory notifiable one, no case was reported. As far as I can judge, all the midwives in the district quite understand the necessity of notifying a case, and the evil results that may follow a neglected case.

Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis and Acute Poliomyelitis.

One case of Acute Poliomyelitis was notified.

This case was not seen by a Medical man until some considerable time after the onset. It was a mild case, and was confined to one lower limb. The Tibialis Anticus and Extensor group of muscles were effected. I was unable to trace any source of Infection.

No case of Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis occurred in the District.

Meales.

The district was practically free from this disease during the year. I had no notification from a School source.

Infantile Mortality.

The deaths of Infants under one year numbered 58, which is equal to a death rate per thousand births of 104. This is a rate considerably over last year, but yet is fairly satisfactory. The rates for the preceeding five years, being as follows :—

1909	...	160
1910	...	106
1911	...	118
1912	.	128
1913	...	78·4

The question of Infantile Mortality is a matter that deserves and is receiving a good deal of attention at the present time.

This year, the Local Government Board issued a Memorandum outlining a scheme suggested by them to be adopted in whole or in part by Local Authorities, and intimated in a letter accompanying the Memorandum, their willingness to consider applications for Grants in respect of any work falling within the scope of the scheme covered by the Local Authority. It is stated that the Grants will normally amount to one-half the approved expenditure. The memorandum was brought before the Council.

There is no scheme whatsoever in operation in this district. During the year, I asked the District Nurse in the Central Ward to undertake in her spare time the supervision of certain cases, chiefly artificially fed infants. This she consented to do, and from the reports she made to me and from personal observation, the work she so generously undertook was attended with considerable success.

The first step in the carrying out of a scheme of this kind is the adoption of the Notification of Births' Act, and the appointment of the necessary official to carry out the work. I should certainly advise the Health Committee to give the scheme their serious consideration.

The number of deaths from Atrophy, Debility and Marasmus is always an indication of the number of preventable

deaths. Not all of these deaths could have been prevented by skilled attention and advice, but it can be definitely stated that some of them could. The advice of the usual family Medical attendant is not always adhered to, but is set aside and antiquated methods of infants feeding substituted. Many authorities that have given this matter the earnest thought that it deserves have adopted some system of supervision of infant feeding, and have employed skilled Officials to carry out the work. In certain districts, the services of the District Nurse have been employed for this purpose. I have already stated, that in the Central Ward, this method was adopted with good results. I think, that when half the total expenses of the work can be recovered, there is no excuse for any public body shutting its eyes to the good results that may be achieved by adopting the scheme of the Local Government Board in whole or in part.

Death Rate.

There were two hundred and fifteen deaths registered in the district, giving a death rate of 12.3.

There were no deaths among non-residents in the district, but 17 deaths occurred of persons residing in other districts and belonging to this district. When these are included in the previous total, the death rate becomes 13.32.

In order to make it comparable with other districts, it is corrected by the factor for age and sex distribution, which gives a true death rate of 13.55.

The death rate for the six months ending June was 14.8, that for the six months ending December was 11.7.

The number of deaths from Cancer is about double that of last year, eleven of those occurred in the Norton Ward, six in Walsall Wood Ward, and three in the Central Ward. One of the 3 cases in the Central Ward resided in Norton Canes, six months before death. The other causes of death showing a great increase over last year are Pneumonia, Pulmonary Tuberculosis, and Heart Disease.

There were ten deaths from Lobar Pneumonia, which during the first part of the year appeared in certain parts of the district, in almost epidemic form.

Births.

The number of Births was 559, a rate of 32.1. This is a considerable drop from the rate of last year 36.9, but still is a very satisfactory birth rate.

In conclusion, I have to ask that this Report be printed in pamphlet form, octavo size, and that three copies be sent to the Local Government Board, three copies to the County Council at Stafford, and one to the Secretary of State.

I have to thank the Chairman and the Members of the Council for the consideration and courtesy extended to me during the year, and my fellow officials for the help they have given me at all times. I am also indebted to my medical colleagues for the kindly interest they always show in Public Health Work.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

R. G. BRADFORD.



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE
INSPECTOR OF NUISANCES,

For the Year ending the 31st day of December, 1914.

*To the Chairman and Members of the
Brownhills Urban District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit to your Council, my Annual Report of the work carried out during the year ending December 1914. It will be observed from a perusal of this report and the statistics given, that much has been done towards the improving and keeping of your District in a Sanitary condition.

I am pleased to say, and that in no case has it been necessary to resort to legal proceedings, to enforce the abatement of a nuisance.

Your District comprises an area of 6,307 acres, or nearly 10 square miles.

The total number of houses equals 3,371, with a population of 17,408 persons.

Notices.

During the year 324 Notices describing the Sanitary defects discovered, with a specification of the work necessary to remedy the same have been served to abate nuisances of various descriptions, in connection with premises in different parts of your District.

Description of Nuisances.

The following is a tabulated statement of the nuisances discovered and dealt with under the Public Health Act, 1875, Housing Town Planning Act, 1909, and the Council's Bye-Laws:—

Houses found in a foul condition	-	7
Houses found structurally defective	-	427
Houses found unfit for habitation	-	8
Defective or inefficient drains	-	22
Defective traps	-	54
Blocked drains and other faults	-	109
Defective water supply	-	17
Defective privies and ash pits	-	107
Animals improperly kept	-	2
Deposits of refuse and manure	-	2
Defective water closets	-	5
Other nuisances	-	277
Ash pits and privies cleansed	-	4000
Number of loads of night-soil removed	-	9345
Samples of water taken for analysis	-	22
Samples condemned unfit for drinking	-	22

Unwholesome Food.

Two boxes of pears and 48 rabbits which were in a condition unfit for food were voluntary surrendered and destroyed.

Infectious Disease.

Lots of infected bedding and articles disinfected	140
Houses disinfected after infectious disease	- 140
Schools disinfected after infectious disease	- 4

Drainage.

All new buildings erected during the year have been properly connected to the district sewers where available, and drains have been reconstructed in the older class of houses where existing drains were found defective.

Flushing Drains.

This is an important question which requires the attention of house-holders. The neglect to cleanse out the traps and flush the drains, and the sweeping of all kinds of rubbish into the drains gives rise to most of the complaints, whereas, if the gully traps were cleansed and the drains flushed about once a week, considerable nuisance, expense and inconvenience would be avoided.

Sinks.

A large number of Insanitary Brick Sinks have been demolished, and earthenware sinks substituted. The substitution of earthenware sinks is insisted upon, in every case where brick sinks are defective.

Excrement and Refuse Removal.

In connection with this important branch of your Sanitary Department, I have to report that a large amount of work has been carried out during the year. The whole of the night soil removal is being done by your own Staff, and I am pleased to say is being carried out as systematically and thoroughly as the scattered nature of the district will allow. This appears to be giving every satisfaction.

During the year, 4,000 ashpits and privies have been emptied and cleansed, and 9,345 loads of night soil removed, making an average of 1,797 loads per week.

Water Closets.

During the year, 45 privy middens have been converted into Fresh Water Closets, 5 into Waste Water Closets, and 39 into Pail Closets. Twelve Pail Closets have been converted into Fresh Water Closets. This makes a total of 516 Water Closets in the District, an increase of 92 over last year, and 198 Pail Closets, an increase of 27 over last year.

The conversion of privy middens into Water Closets is a very pleasing feature, and one which I have advocated for many years; but there still remains a large number of privy middens to be dealt with, and I would strongly urge upon property owners, the necessity of abolishing the insanitary privies as soon as possible and adopting the Water Carriage system, which would be more beneficial in every respect.

Much have been said, and many objections raised, with regard to the connecting of water closets to the sewers, and the serious consequences likely to follow the general adoption of the same, but I am still of the same opinion, as stated in my last report, that the advantages gained by adopting water closets would far exceed the disadvantages. This has been shewn time after time in reports from other districts, similar to your own, where the water carriage system has been generally adopted. The advantages of the system are many, including the following :—

- (a) Cleanliness, less foul conditions and stench.
- (b) The annual cost of the removal of night soil would be greatly reduced.
- (c) The filthy matter would not have to be carted through the streets, the excreta being immediately carried away down the sewers.
- (d) Dry ashpit or bin only would be required, the contents of which could be removed at any hour of the day.
- (e) No percolation of foul or offensive matter through defective brickwork.
- (f) The manurial value of the sewage would be increased, and in the case of waste water closets, without any increase in the volume of sewage to be dealt with, as these closets are flushed by the water from sinks, &c., which in any case is admitted to the sewers.

Overcrowding.

Overcrowding is one of the most difficult questions that a Sanitary Inspector has to deal with. The Public Health Act, 1875, under which the Inspector is required to act, does not give any definition of the word overcrowding, neither does it specify the cubic space the Inspector is to allow for each occupant. If at the time of his visit, he has reason to believe that overcrowding does exist, he serves the usual notice on the tenant, and if the number of inmates consist only of householder, wife and family, occupying a house with only two bedrooms, much difficulty is at times experienced in abating the nuisance, owing to the scarcity of houses containing more than two bedrooms in the District.

Water Supply.

During the year, water services have been laid on, or existing services improved in 89 houses, from the mains of the South Staffordshire Waterworks Company.

Samples of water were taken from twenty-two wells and submitted to the Analyst for examination, the whole of the samples were condemned as unfit for drinking. Twenty of the wells have been closed, and forty-nine houses in connection therewith, have been supplied with water from the Company's mains.

Infectious Disease.

One hundred and forty cases of Infectious Disease have been notified during the year. As soon as possible after the receipt of the notification, the house has been visited and inquiries made with regard to the probable source of infection, milk supply, isolation and school attendance, and the necessary instructions and precautions to be taken to prevent the spread of the disease given to the occupier. The sanitary condition of the house and surroundings has been examined.

Disinfectants have been freely supplied to persons applying for same. Disinfection of rooms, &c, after cases of infectious disease, has been carried out by means of spraying with Formaldehyde, and fumigation with Formaldehyde Lamps, the bedding clothes, &c, are now disinfected in the Steam Disinfecter.

Factory & Workshops' Act, 1878, 1891, 1895 and 1901.

The work required to be carried out by the Inspector under these Acts, includes the inspection of any premises, room or place where manual labour is employed, for making any article, or part of any article, or in repairing, altering, ornamenting or finishing any article.

The various workshops and workplaces have been frequently visited and inspected, as to cleanliness, ventilation, &c., in only a few instances, was it found necessary to speak to the occupier as to limewashing, and this was done without any further action being taken, generally the premises were found in a good condition.

Slaughter-houses.

There are 14 registered slaughter-houses in your District, to which periodical visits have been paid. The whole of the slaughter-houses are in a fairly good condition, and kept in a clean and satisfactory state generally. Where I have seen cause for complaint, and called the attention of the occupier to this, immediate steps have been taken to remedy the matter.

Unsound Food.

Two boxes of decayed pears, and 48 rabbits, which were in such a state as to be unfit for human consumption, were voluntary surrendered and destroyed.

Bakehouses.

Periodical visits have been made in connection with the the Bakehouses in your District, of which there are 14, and except in a few instances, these were found to be clean and satisfactorily conducted. There are no underground bakehouses.

Cowsheds.

Your Medical Officer and myself have visited and inspected most of the Cowsheds in your District, of which there are 20, with a view to preparing a full and detailed report upon the sanitary condition, ventilation, and structural arrangements of each cowshed, which report we hope to lay before you at an early date, so that steps can be taken to remedy the defects now existing.

Canal Boat Inspection.

Thirty-five Cabin boats were inspected during the year. There were found to be duly registered to carry 102 persons, the number actually occupying being 70.

No case of overcrowding or infectious disease was discovered.

In nearly every case, the only persons aboard at the time of the inspection, were the master and mate.

The cabins of the whole of the boats were found in a clean and tidy condition, and well painted. Each boat was found to carry a suitable water vessel.

It has not been found necessary to take any legal proceedings.

In conclusion, I beg to tender to your Council, my best thanks for your confidence and support during the year, and to my Co-officials for their valuable help and assistance.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

DAVID A. BRADBURY,

Sanitary Inspector.



TABLE 1.

Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1914, and Previous Years.
Name of District—BROWNHILLS URBAN.

YEAR.	POPULATION-ESTIMATED TO MIDDLE OF EACH YEAR.		BIRTHS.		TOTAL DEATHS REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT.		TRANSFERABLE DEATHS.		NETT DEATHS REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT.				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	UNDERLYING RATE OF RESIDENTS NOT REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT.		RATE PER 1000 NETT BIRTHS	NUMBER	RATE
									NUMBER	RATE			
1909	16552	...	572	34.5	260	15.7	...	12	92	160	272	16.4	
1910	16724	...	556	33.2	186	11.1	...	3	59	106	189	11.3	
1911	16896	...	542	32.0	231	13.6	...	23	64	118	254	15.0	
1912	17068	547	551	32.2	232	13.5	...	31	71	128	263	15.4	
1913	17235	631	637	36.9	168	9.7	5	14	50	78	177	10.3	
1914	17408	558	559	32.1	215	12.3	...	17	58	10.4	232	13.55	

Area of District in acres (exclusive of Area covered by Water) 6304.

Total Population at all ages at Census of 1911	...	...	16856
Total Families	...	...	3371

TABLE 2.

Cases of Infectious Disease notified during
the Year 1914.

Name of District—BROWNHILLS URBAN.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	At all ages.	NUMBER OF CASES NOTIFIED.						
		At Ages Years.						
		Under 1 years.	1 and under 5 years.	5 and under 15 years.	15 and under 25 years.	25 and under 45 years.	45 and under 65 years.	65 and up- wards
Small-pox	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cholera	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Plague	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria (including Membranous croup)	67	...	15	46	2	4	...	...
Erysipelas	...	11	...	...	1	...	1	7
Scarlet Fever	...	69	1	15	53	...	...	...
Typhus Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Enteric Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Relapsing Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Continued Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Puerperal Fever	...	2	...	...	...	1	1	...
Cerebro spinal Meningitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Poliomyelitis	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	20	...	...	2	5	9	4	...
Other forms of Tuberculosis	6	...	...	4	...	1	1	...
Totals	...	176	1	31	106	8	16	12
								2

Small-pox Hospital only.

TABLE 3.

Causes of, and Ages at, Death during the Year 1914.

Name of District— BROWNHILLS URBAN.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Nett Deaths at the subjoined ages of "Residents" whether occurring within or without the District.										Total deaths whether of Residents or Non- Residents in Institu- tions in the District
	All Ages	1 and under 1 Year	2 and under 2	5 and under 5	15 and under 15	25 and under 25	25 and under 45	45 and under 65	65 and up- wards	10	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
All Cases	232	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	232
Certified											
Uncertified	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Enteric Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Small Pox	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Measles	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	2	2	...	...	...	...	4
Diphtheria and Croup	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Influenza	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Erysipelas	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tu- berculosis)	11	...	...	...	1	4	4	2	...	...	11
Tuberculous Meningitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Oth'r Tuberc'l's Diseases	4	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	4
Cancer, Malignant Disease	20	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	13	3	20
Rheumatic Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Meningitis	5	2	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Organic Heart Disease	26	...	...	...	3	2	2	10	9	26	...
Bronchitis	19	7	...	...	1	...	...	5	6	19	...
Pneumonia (all forms)	25	9	3	2	...	3	1	4	3	25	...
Other Diseases of Res- piratory Organs	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Diarrhoea and Enteritis	5	2	1	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	5
Appendicitis & Typhlitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cirrhosis of Liver	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	2
Alcoholism	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Nephritis and Bright's Disease	7	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	4	...	7
Puerperal Fever	2	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	2
Other accidents & diseases of Pregnancy & Parturi- tion	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Congenital Debility and Malformation including Premature Birth	27	27	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	27
Violent Deaths excluding Suicide	7	3	...	...	2	2	...	...	...	...	7
Suicides	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other Defined Diseases	63	7	1	1	1	...	2	14	37	63	...
Diseases ill-defined or unknown	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals	232	58	6	9	12	13	18	55	61	232	

Sub-Entries — Poliomyelitis

Pneumonia

114

10

Table 4.

Name of District—BROWNHILLS URBAN.

INFANTILE MORTALITY DURING YEAR 1914.

Nett Deaths from stated Causes at various Ages under One Year of Age.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	All Causes. Certified	Under 1 Week		1-2 Weeks.		2-3 Weeks		3-4 Weeks.		Total under 1 Month.		1-3 Months.		3-6 Months.		6-9 Months.		9-12 Months.		Total Deaths under 1 Year	
	
Small-pox	...																				
Chicken-pox	...																				
Measles	...																				
Scarlet Fever	...																				
Whooping Cough	...																				
Diphtheria and Croup	...																				
Erysipelas	...																				
Tuberculous Meniugitis	...																				
Abdominal Tuberculous	...																				
Other Tuberculous Diseases	...																				
Meningitis (not Tuberculous)	...																				
Convulsions	...																				
Laryngitis	...																				
Bronchitis	...																				
Pneumonia (all forms)	...																				
Diarrhoea	...																				
Enteritis	...																				
Gastritis	...																				
Syphilis	...																				
Rickets	...																				
Suffocation, overlying	...	1																			
Injury at Birth	..																				
Atelectasis	..																				
Congenital Malformations	..	2																			
Premature Birth	..	7			1																
Atrophy Debiity, and																					
Marasmus	..	3	2	1	1																
Other Causes	..	1																			
Totals	...	13	2	3	1	19		9	19		7	4	58								

Nett Births in the Year .. 559.

Nett Deaths in the year .. 58.

TABLE 5.

SUMMARY OF SANITARY WORK done in the Nuisance Inspector's Department during the year 1914, in the Urban District of Brownhills.

		Number of	Abatement Notices,		Nuisances Abated after Notice by	
			Inspections and Observations made,	Defects found.	Informal by Inspector.	Formal by Authority.
Dwelling-houses and Schools	Foul Conditions	..	7	..	7	..
	Structural Defects	..	427	..	104	..
	Overcrowding	..	10	..	10	..
	Unfit for Habitation	..	8	..	8	..
	Lodging-houses	..	..	..	..	..
	Dairies and Milkshops	..	..	..	..	..
	Cowsheds (§)	80	..	..	..	..
	Bakehouses	..	120	6	6	..
	Slaughter-houses	..	300	..	..	..
	Canal Boats	..	35	..	..	..
House Drainage	Ashpits and Privies	..	2000	107	..	53
	Deposits of Refuse and Manure	..	..	2	2	..
	Water Closets	..	..	5	5	..
	Defective Traps	..	..	54	10	10
	No Disconnection	..	..	22	4	..
	Other Faults	..	..	109	..	21
	Water Supply	..	..	17	1	1
	Pigsties	..	..	..	..	..
	Animals improperly kept	..	..	1	1	..
	Offensive Trades	..	..	..	..	..
Food	Smoke Nuisances	..	..	..	..	..
	Other Nuisances	..	..	277	11	65
Totals		3485	1052	40	284	36
						209

Unwholesome Food.	Number of Seizures—2 boxes of Pears, and 48 Rabbits unfit for food, voluntary surrendered and destroyed	..
	Condemned by Magistrates	..
	Prosecutions for exposing for sale	..
	Convictions ditto ditto	..
	Samples taken for Analysis	..
Food and Drugs Act.	Numbered foot adulterated, etc.	..
	Proceedings taken	..
	Number of Convictions	..
	Samples of Water taken for Analysis	..
	, , condemned as unfit for use	..

Precautions against Infectious Disease.

Lots of Infected Bedding disinfected or destroyed	..	140
Houses disinfected after Infectious Disease	..	140
Schools ditto ditto	..	4
Prosecutions for not notifying Existence of Infectious Disease	..	..
Convictions ditto ditto ditto	..	..
Prosecutions for exposure of Infected Persons or things	..	..
Convictions ditto ditto	..	..

(§) Detailed Report upon the Sanitary condition of each Cowshed being prepared.

MARCH 15TH. 1915.

Signed, D. A. BRADBURY,
Inspector of Nuisances.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT, 1901,
 In connection with Factories, Workshops, Workplaces and Homework.

Name of District—**BROWNHILLS URBAN.**

1.—Inspection of Factories, Workshops and Workplaces,
 Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors or Inspectors of Nuisances.

Premises. 1	Number of		
	Inspections. 2	Written Notices. 3	Prosecutions 4
Factories	12	...	...
(Including Factory Laundries)			
Workshops			
(Including Workshop Laundries)			
Workplaces	90	...	...
(Other than Outworkers' premises included in Part 3 of this Report)			
 Total	102	...	...

2.—Defects found in Factories, Workshops and Workplaces.

Particulars. 1	Number of Defects.			Number of Prosecu- tions. 5
	Found. 2	Remedied. 3	Referred to H. M. Inspector. 4	
Nuisances under the Public Health Acts—				
Want of Cleanliness	6	6	...	...
Want of Ventilation ... ...	...	...	...	...
Overcrowding ... ...	...	...	...	...
Want of drainage of floors ...	...	...	...	...
Other nuisances ...	...	...	...	...
§ Sanitary accommodation—				
Insufficient	1	...	...	...
Unsuitable or defective ...	...	...	...	...
Not separate for sexes ...	...	...	...	...
Offence under the Factory and Work- shop Act—				
Illegal occupation of underground bakehouse ...	...	...	...	...
Breach of special sanitary requirements for bakehouses ...	...	...	...	...
Other offences ...	...	...	...	...
(Excluding offences relating to out- work which are included in Part 3 of this Report)				
 Total	7	6	...	..

§ Work to remedy in hand.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT, 1901,

In connection with Factories, Workshops, Workplaces, and Homework.

Name of District—BROWNHILLS URBAN.

3.—Homework. Nil.

4.—Registered Workshops.

Workshops on the Registrar (s. 131) at the end of the year. 1	Number. 2
Bakehouses ...	11
Dressmakers and Milliners ...	11
Blacksmiths and Wheelwrights ...	7
Bootmakers ...	5
Tailors ...	2
Boatmaker ...	1
Sand Pits, &c. ...	3
Factories... ...	3
Total number of Workshops on Register ...	43

5.—Other Matters. Nil.

Signed, R. G. BRADFORD,

15th March, 1915.

Medical Officer of Health.

